A

LETTER

TO THE

OFFICERS

OF THE

BRITISH NAVY.

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A

LETTER

TO THE

Admirals of GREAT BRITAIN.

GENTLEMEN,

YOU will perhaps be ſurpriſed at the Appearance of a Piece, which may be conſtrued into Impertinence, if not into Impudence and Preſumption. You will be amazed at the Arrogance of a private Perſon, who dares to intermeddle with the Conduct of publick Officers, and you may wonder at the

Folly of a Man who can buſy himſelf in Matters which he knows Nothing of; For I confeſs that I have no Vote in the Houſe, nor was I ever three Leagues from the *Britiſh* Shore.

As to the Charge of Impudence, give me Leave to ſay, Gentlemen, that it is not unbecoming the Modeſty of an *Engliſhman* to offer Advice even to the great Council of the Kingdom. Be it in their Prudence to follow or reject it; but they have no Right to reſent it. As to my Ignorance of Maritime Affairs, it by no Means hinders me from knowing the Duty of thoſe Perſons, on whoſe Conduct depends ſo much of their Country's Welfare, as *England* is obliged to truſt in the Hands of her Admirals.

A *Macedonian*, who had otherwiſe been of no Conſequence, became very

uſeful to his Country by being employed daily to remind *Philip*, the greateſt Monarch of his Time, that he was a Man; and I flatter myſelf, that I ſhall be of ſome Service to mine, by endeavouring to fix in your Minds that you are Admirals.

The Faults which we obſerve in the Conduct of moſt Men, ariſe chiefly from their Forgetfulneſs of the Station they are in. It is impoſſible that a Man ſhould diſcharge the Duties of his Office, if his Thoughts are not employed on them. He that would act like a Judge muſt think like a Judge: and it would be equally ridiculous and culpable in ſuch a one not to conſider the Importance of his Situation, as the neceſſary and immediate Conſequence muſt be, that he would not perform the Duties of it. The ſame will be the Caſe in every Station, in every Condition of Life.

Be it then, Gentlemen, and, eſpecially at this Time, be it your Care to conſider diligently the Duties and Importance of your Office. Be it never abſent from your Minds, that on you depends not only the Proſperity, but even the Safety of your Country.

The Situation of our Iſland obliges us to depend on our Marine Force for Protection, and the Power and Authority of *Britain*, abroad, will riſe or fall, juſt as her Fleets flouriſh or decay.

An Invaſion from *France* muſt have Succeſs, if our Navy could not keep them off. Should they ever be able to land, we ourſelves ſeem not to intend them any Oppoſition; for ſurely the utmoſt we could make would be next to none. I imagine the *French* could land 100,000 Men with nearly the ſame Trouble as 20,000: at leaſt I am ſure that

that tho' the Trouble might be greater, yet, as they want not Men, they moſt probably would do it. Suppoſe then ſuch an Army landed on our Coaſts: and what but our Fleets can prevent it? We will ſuppoſe too our Militia to be Men of as much Renown and Military Skill as our Warriors of the Artillery Ground: (I hope this Suppoſition will not be called extravagant, as with proper Care and Diligence a few Years may poſſibly make them ſo.) We might then, we will ſay, march an Army of 60,000 Men, (a jumbled Medley of Soldiers and Taylors, commanded perhaps by a General of Experience, ſome of its Officers ſuch as had ſeen Service, but the major Part thoſe whoſe Ideas of a Battle are very little different from ſuch as have been raiſed in them by the Confuſion of a Corn-Riot) againſt 100,000 of the beſt diſciplined Troops in *Europe*, headed,

as

as undoubtedly they will be, by a Commander of great Military Skill, and whoſe very Subalterns have been accuſtomed to ſtudy the Art of War as a Science, and conſider it as the Buſineſs of their Lives. Of two ſuch Armies there can be little or no Diſpute which would be the Victor. Nay, I can hardly ſee how one can poſſibly make any Stand againſt the other. Our Fleets then muſt protect us from an Invaſion. In your Hands therefore, Gentlemen, are placed the only Means of your Country's Preſervation. On your Conduct depend both the Welfare and Glory of *Great Britain.*

I cannot but imagine, Gentlemen, that the Behaviour of the Officers and Seamen of the Navy, in the Time of Action, will depend a great deal on their Manners or Morals. That Coolneſs of Temper which is almoſt ſure to make

it's

it's Poſſeſſors victorious, is the inſeparable Companion of good Men in Times of Danger and Confuſion, and almoſt as utter a Stranger to the diſſolute and prophane.

Such, I think, ſeems to have been the Opinion of our Legiſlators, when they appointed Salaries for Chaplains on board our Men of War. Theſe Chaplains were certainly intended to keep up at leaſt an Appearance of Piety among our Seamen, and to prevent them from openly trampling on Religion. But the Deſign, however good, ſeems to have failed. A Chaplainſhip in the Navy, like other Preferments, is procured by Intereſt: Now the ſame Intereſt which enables a Man to obtain this Office, is ſufficient alſo to get him excuſed from Attendance on the Duties of it; for a Cruiſe or an Expedition cannot be ſuppoſed extremely agreeable to a Perſon,

a Perſon, who, pardon the Expreſſion, has had a liberal Land-Education. By this ſame Intereſt alſo, a Sea-Chaplain is frequently allowed to ſave himſelf the Expence of ſending a Deputy in his Office, or even if he does ſend one, it is ſuch a one as he can procure for the leaſt Price, and, conſequently, one whoſe Character and, perhaps, whoſe Maintenance on Shore is forfeited by Irregularity. For it is highly reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that many a worthy Clergyman would willingly go to Sea for ſixty, eighty or a hundred Pounds a Year, rather than live on thirty Pounds a Year in a Curacy; who yet, when the Income is equal, would much rather chuſe to remain on Shore: and I imagine that few Deputy Chaplainſhips in the Navy are worth more than our common Curacies. Beſides, I am ſorry, Gentlemen, to ſay it, it frequently happens, that, tho' the Chaplain be a Man of Merit,

and

and would with Pleaſure perform his Duty, yet the Captain and chief Officers of the Ship not only connive at but even encourage the foremaſtmen in their Neglect of Attendance at Prayers, *&c.* conſequently, the Chaplain, and his Office, are made the Butts of Ridicule for the whole Crew. On theſe two Accounts, Gentlemen, it is too often the Caſe, that divine Service is ſcarcely performed during the whole Courſe of a long Voyage.

I confeſs myſelf ſo unpolite in my Notions as to believe that there is a God; that this God has both Power and will to aſſiſt thoſe who regulate their Lives by his Directions, and conſequently, that ſuch have the beſt Chance for his Aid and Protection in the Day of Battle. How he aſſiſts them, is nothing to the Purpoſe. It is evident from all Hiſtory, that thoſe Armies and Fleets, which,

either from the Goodneſs of their Cauſe or the Regularity of their Lives, have had Reaſon to expect and depend on the Favour and Aſſiſtance of Heaven, have always fought with ſuch an amazing Fortitude and ſo ſteady a Confidence, as enabled them to overturn all Oppoſition. Little of ſuch an Aid can, I fear, be expected by a *Britiſh* Fleet, the Bulk of whoſe Sailors pride themſelves in daring Defiance to every Thing ſacred, and boaſt, as a Proof of their conſummate Intrepidity, that they neither dread the Vengeance of Heaven, nor fear the Torments of Hell.

It cannot be imagined that the ſupreme Power would give the Victory to thoſe who would thank him for it no otherwiſe than by the moſt ſhocking Blaſphemy and Profaneneſs, and ſpend the Time which his Protection procured them, in the conſtant Service of Sin. I pretend

pretend not ſo ſay, Gentlemen, that the Contagion is univerſal. Many, no doubt, there are in the Navy, whoſe Behaviour does Honour to their Religion as well as to their Profeſſion. But the Corruption is ſo general, as to have become notorious.

I am perſuaded, that the chief Cauſe of the Immorality of our Seamen, is their total Ignorance of almoſt every Thing which does not immediately concern their Profeſſion. What the ingenious and ſenſible Author of a *Letter to the Gentlemen of the Army* ſays on the ſame Occaſion, may, I fear, with equal Reaſon be applied to the Officers, &c. of our Fleets. " It is amazing, " ſays he, that the Gentlemen of the " Army [and full as much ſo, I aſſert, " that thoſe of the Navy] are in general " ſo unpardonably illiterate, when they " have ſo much Leiſure for Improve-

" ment. Were they but acquainted
" with the Pleaſures of a ſtudious Man
" they would not be reduced to *kill*
" Time (as they moſt properly term it)
" in the ſhameful Manner they gene-
" rally do. They would then find
" their Hours and Days too ſhort, rather
" than a Burthen to them: nay, I
" affirm from Experience, that after a
" few Hours of rational Solitude, they
" would even enjoy the Pleaſures of
" Society in a much higher Degree,
" than they do at preſent. And how
" much better would they be qualified
" for Society? what an inexhauſtible
" Source of Converſation would it af-
" ford them? How much better would
" they be qualified to talk of Things
" relating to their own Profeſſion; and
" what entertaining and inſtructive
" Companions might we expect to find
" in a Set of Men, who, to the great
" Opportunity they have of knowing

" the

" the World, would add that Know-
" ledge, which can only be acquired by
" Reading? Beſides, I hold it impoſſi-
" ble for a Man to be a good Officer
" who is not a good Hiſtorian. Expe-
" rience, it is true, may, in Time,
" bring him acquainted with his Duty,
" but, in all Probability, he will buy
" that Experience at the Expence of his
" Country."

Thus far this ingenious Writer. Give me leave to obſerve further, Gentlemen, that this Ignorance is more ſhameful in the Officers of the Navy, than in thoſe of the Army. An Officer in the Sea-Service muſt have as much vacant Time (I mean that Time when he is not employed in the Buſineſs of his Commiſſion) as they of an equal Rank in the Land Service; and I will venture to aſſert, that the former has much fewer Avocations or Temptations from Study

Study or Reading, than the latter. Cuſtom has made Dreſs and Politeneſs almoſt indiſpenſible Duties of the Officers of the Army.

As the Land-Forces are always, or at leaſt generally, quartered in our large Towns, it is for our own Credit, as well as for that of our Sovereign, that our Soldiers be neat, and our Officers genteel, in their Dreſs. This, without being Fops, muſt neceſſarily take up ſome Part of their Time. Neither can they, nor do I think they ought to avoid fomring Acquaintance and cultivating Friendſhips with the Gentry in and near their Quarters, for our Connections with the more immediate Servants of our King naturally make us more zealous in our Loyalty and more warm in his Intereſt: And the Intereſts of the King and Kingdom of *Great Britain* are ſo intimately blended, that we cannot increaſe our

Zeal

Zeal for the one without becoming better Subjects of the other. In order to this, the Gentlemen of the Army are obliged to give into the favourite Pleaſures of the Place, and frequent it's faſhionable Diverſions. Here then are Avocations from Reading; and it may, at leaſt, be ſaid of the Land Officers, that they find ſome Employment or Amuſement, which ſerves as an Excuſe (tho' but a trifling one) for their Want of Application to Books. But the Gentlemen of the Navy are ſo far from having any Temptations to neglect their Reading, that I am amazed they do not fly to it as an Amuſement! It is aſtoniſhing, that any Man of Senſe or Reaſon can paſs whole Months, confined perhaps to cruiſe in a particular Latitude, his conſtant proſpect Sky and Water, and little or no Diverſion, or at leaſt no rational one to beguile the tedious Hours,

Hours, without ever attempting either to entertain or improve his Mind! Yet ſuch is too truly and too generally the Caſe with our Seafaring Gentlemen.

Theſe are Faults which cry aloud for Amendment. I pretend not to ſay, Gentlemen, that it is in your Power to put an immediate Stop to the Diſeaſe; but it is in your Power, and it is moſt certainly your Duty to begin a Cure. The Subaltern Officers of our Fleets cannot but be influenced by the Authority and Example of their Superiors; and the Behavior of the Officers would ſoon become a Rule of Action to the Seamen. When the Morals of our Navy are amended, and its Ignorance diſpelled, *Britain* may again ſway the Sceptre of the Deep. We may then be aſſured that our Sailors will fight with ſteady Reſolution, and that our Officers will command with ſuperior Skill; for a good

Man

Man cannot be a Coward, when the Proſperity and Honor of his Country are the Prizes of Victory; and the Skill of a Commander muſt neceſſarily be increaſed by his literary Knowledge.

A very little Reflection, Gentlemen, on the preſent Condition of our Country, muſt, one would imagine, ſpur up every one of us to exert his Utmoſt for our Preſervation; at leaſt, it would convince us, that the utmoſt Exertion of our Power is neceſſary to preſerve us. We are at preſent engaged in the Heat of a War with a near and an inveterate Enemy. The Power of this Enemy has been for ſome Years induſtriouſly growing, while we have negligently ſuffered ours rather to ſink.

What Advantages have hitherto been gained in this War, have chiefly been in Favor of our Foes. The *Britiſh* Flag,

which uſed to ſtrike Terror into, and command Reſpect from, the greateſt Powers in *Europe*, is now alaſs! diſregarded; I had like to have ſaid, diſgraced; for it is ſurely little leſs than a Diſgrace to the *Engliſh* Navy to ſuffer even a Rival on the Ocean. It is our Element. We muſt be neceſſarily enſlaved, if we ſuffer the Empire of the Main to be wreſted from us; and even if it is diſputed with us, our Right in the Ballance of *Europe* muſt dwindle to nothing. It is neither conſiſtent with the Nature of our Conſtitution, nor can we, without ruining our Manufactories, and conſequently our Trade, keep on Foot a Land-Force ſufficient to give us a Sway among the Powers of *Europe*; and even were we able to keep ever ſo numerous an Army in Pay, we muſt yet never think of turning the Scale, unleſs we were ſtrong alſo at Sea.

Cicero,

Cicero, in his *Offices*, ſays, *Parvi ſunt foris Arma, niſi eſt Conſilium Domi*, or, (as all Politicians are not Latiniſts) The Force of Arms abroad will not avail much, unleſs Meaſures are properly concerted at Home. The greateſt Inſtance of this, which I can at preſent recollect, is the Caſe of *Annibal*. That General, in his Expedition to *Italy* againſt the *Romans*, performed more than could have been expected from a Mortal. He was for a long Time victorious; but when frequent Battles, though ſucceſsful ones, had greatly weakened his Army, thoſe Supplies which his Country ſhould have furniſhed him, were withheld by the withering Hand of Party, conſequently the brave Efforts which the noble *Carthaginian* had made for the Honor of his Republic, were baffled, and he himſelf fell a Sacrifice to the Factions of his Countrymen.

If the Order of the Words in this Line of *Tully*'s was changed to, *Parvi eſt Conſilium Domi, niſi ſunt foris Arma*, or, However wiſely Meaſures are concerted, they will be of ſmall Service, unleſs they are properly and vigorouſly executed, the Aſſertion would be full as true; and Examples of this Kind might be drawn from the Hiſtories of almoſt every People under the Sun. We have a recent and a ſhameful one to be recorded in the Annals of our own Country. I will not enter ſo far into the Merits of the late Miniſtry, as to enquire whether or no their Meaſures were properly concerted; but this I am aſſured of, that they were not vigorouſly purſued. Had Mr. *Byng* performed the Duty of a *Britiſh* Admiral, *Minorca* muſt yet have been an *Engliſh* Iſland. If the Schemes for the Preſervation of that Place had been laid with the utmoſt

Prudence

Prudence and Wiſdom, they muſt have failed, when the Execution of them was truſted to a Man, who either dared not, or knew not how to fight.

A *Benbow*, a *Blake*, it is not long ſince we might have ſaid, a *Byng* would not have heſitated a Moment how to have acted, on falling in with an Enemy's Fleet, either equal, or even ſuperior to them in Strength. Had there been with them as preſſing a Neceſſity of fighting, as our late unfortunate Admiral was under, I am perſuaded, that no Superiority on the Enemy's Side could have deterred them from it. But alaſs! it is of little Conſequence to us now, to know whether Error miſguided or Cowardice infatuated him: Too certain it is, that he miſbehaved, or his Country would not have demanded his Blood to appeaſe her injured Honor. It ought however to be mentioned, as due to his gallant Reſignation of Life, that his

his Diſgrace ſhould no otherwiſe be remembered, than as a Mark to future Commanders, to avoid the Rocks on which he ſplit.

The preſent ſinking Condition of our Country, and the Enemy's Succeſs and growing Strength at Sea, not only render it, Gentlemen, more your Duty to exert yourſelves, but increaſe alſo the Rewards which you may expect for your Vigor in her Behalf. *Britannia*, jealous of her Honor, would lay her choiceſt Laurels at the Feet of him who ſhould lead her Fleets to Victory. It muſt be freſh in the Memory of every one, with what exulting Applauſe our whole Iſland rung, with what imaginary Joy each *Britiſh* Boſom glowed, on the ſhort-lived Rumor of Mr. *Byng*'s Succeſs over the *French* Fleet in the *Mediterranean*. Had that Report been true, Mr. *Byng*, at this Day, would moſt probably

probably have been the favorite Subject of the Realm: His Countrymen would have idolized him.

It is at this Time in the Power of an Admiral to do *England* more Service or more prejudice, than any other Subject has an Opportunity of doing. As his Succeſs over the Enemy, which can only be the Conſequence of his Prudence and Reſolution, would purchaſe Proſperity for his Country, exalt her Glory, and fix himſelf immortal in the *Britiſh* Records of Fame, ſo would his Defeat by the Enemy, which muſt neceſſarily be the Conſequence of Want either of Skill or Spirit in his Command, plunge both *Britain* and himſelf in the Depths of Ruin and Diſgrace.

It is now, Gentlemen, our Buſineſs to ſpeak plain: The Man who takes under his Care and Protection ſo much

of

of his Country's Welfare, as an Admiral muſt be truſted with, without being conſcious to himſelf that he poſſeſſes Courage and Conduct ſufficient to enable him to diſcharge the Duties of his Poſt with Honor, cannot be leſs than a conſummate Villain. The Safety and Proſperity of a Kingdom, are Matters of ſerious Conſequence, and when a Man is entruſted with a Commiſſion, on the proper diſcharging the Duties of which the Fate of his Country may in any Meaſure depend, he ought not ſurely to to look upon his Office, as if it were chiefly deſigned to place him in a genteel Rank, and furniſh him with the means of living in affluence: Yet ſuch is too often the Caſe. True indeed it is, a Commiſſion given to a Man, is an Honor to him; it is a Mark of his being approv'd, and that his Countrymen intend him an eaſy and genteel Maintenance; but they expect, in Return for

the

the Proviſion, which they make him, and the Confidence which they repoſe in him, that he, on his Part, ſhould employ his utmoſt Diligence and Efforts for their Service. The very Intention of thoſe ample Salaries which we allow our Officers of Rank and Authority, ſeems to be, to prevent their being embarraſſed by private Difficulties, which might diſturb their Attention to public Buſineſs.

As for the Honor of a Commiſſion to the Man who bears it, it muſt depend on his Behaviour. If indeed a Man diligently and nobly performs the Duties of his Office, then his Honor and Reputation will be the greater, the greater the Dignity or Importance of the Truſt placed in him. But let him not forget, that on the Neglect of his Duty, his Diſgrace will be increaſed by the Importance of his Commiſſion.

Had Mr. *Byng* been a private Sailor, or even an inferior Officer, on the late unfortunate Day in the *Mediterranean*, his Cowardice, Imprudence, or whatever Error in his Conduct it was, would have been ſcarce noticed. The very ſame Behaviour in him, as an Admiral, and as a private Perſon, would be quite different; and the Reaſon of this is, becauſe the Effects are quite different. Had he been a private Man, his ill Behaviour would have affected only his own Character, and the Wrong which his Country would have received, muſt have been but ſmall; but as he was the Commander, his Miſconduct was that of the whole Fleet, and the Diſgrace and Damage which were the natural Conſequences of it, fell as heavily on his Country as on himſelf.

I had

I had wrote thus far and had juſt dipped my Pen into the Standiſh for the concluding Paragraph, when the public Papers brought an Account of the ſafe Return of the grand Expedition-Fleet to *Spithead*. The good People of *England* will, I dare ſay, be not a little ſurpriſed at the News. Though their Countrymen had entertained very high Notions of the Skill and Conduct of both the Sea and Land Officers, who were entruſted with the Management of the Expedition, yet it was never expected that they would be able to bring back ſo great an Armament with the Loſs only of two or three Soldiers, eſpecially after ſuch noble Exploits, as conquering an Iſland, demoliſhing a Fort, making the Garriſon Priſoners of War, and killing a Man!

Seriouſly, Gentlemen, the Maritime Affairs of *Great Britain*, in the Years 1756 and 1757; would cut but a ſorry Figure in an impartial Hiſtory. Two of the fineſt Fleets *England* ever equipt, have been ſent out, and returned, almoſt without *attempting* to execute the Purpoſes they were ſent for.

The bad Management of the *former* Fleet, which was intended to prevent our Enemies from ſucceeding in an Attempt upon one of our Settlements, has been frequently expoſed, and therefore I ſhall ſay no more of it; nor ſhall I enter upon a minute Enquiry into the Merit or Miſconduct of the Gentlemen who conducted the *latter*, in the unfortunate Expedition againſt the Foes of *Britain*.

But

But though I deſign not to attack the Characters of any particular Perſons, yet give me Leave, Gentlemen, to draw a faint Picture of what our Country had Reaſon to expect from the Expedition, and, I hope the Leaders of it will be able to aſſign ſufficient Cauſe for the great Improbability at leaſt, if not for the Impoſſibility of its Succeſs.

As we unfortunately failed in our Endeavours to prevent the *French* from becoming Maſters of an Iſland which was our Property, it was thought expedient for the preſerving of our own Credit and Power, as well as for the weakening that of our Enemy, that we ſhould attempt a Retalliation.

For this Purpoſe, we have been employed for ſome Months in fitting out a Fleet,

a Fleet, which has been generally allowed to be the largeſt, the beſt manned, moſt compleat, and, at the ſame Time, the moſt expenſive one, that *England* ever ſent out. It was attended by Tranſports, filled with the Flower of our Troops, and it was furniſhed with every Thing that could contribute to render it formidable and ſucceſsful. The Officers as well as the private Men, the Soldiers as well as the Sailors, who, we we retold, ſhewed the utmoſt Uneaſineſs during the Time of the Tranſports being detained, received them, at their Arrival, with the greateſt Joy, and the whole Fleet went off in the higheſt Eagerneſs of Spirits. Can it be wondered at then, Gentlemen, that the Expectations of the Kingdom ſhould be highly raiſed, and their Hopes greatly inflamed? How heavy then muſt be their Diſappointment when

when they knew that this noble Armament was returned, almoſt without ſtriking a Blow?

True indeed it is that People who go in an Expedition of this Kind meet with a great many Difficulties, which are little thought of by thoſe who are not perſonally engaged in it. The beſt and ſtrongeſt Meaſures on one Side may be diſconcerted by Meaſures as good and as ſtrong on the other.

The Danger of landing Troops upon an alarmed Coaſt, which glitters with the Arms of Men reſolutely determined, and properly directed, to defend themſelves from the Invaſion of a foreign Enemy, is little known, and conſequently entirely unconſidered by many, who can, at their Eaſe, fancy the Deſtruction of Forts and Cities, and who expect, with every Gale, the

News

News of captived Armies and demoliſhed Fleets. In our Judgment on the Conduct of thoſe who are entruſted with the Management of an Affair of this Kind, we ſhould certainly make Allowance for accidental as well as for obvious Difficulties, and not imagine that the bare roaring of the *Britiſh* Lion will be ſufficient to remove the Obſtacles that bar the Paths of Victory.

But then we have a Right to expect that they ſhould attempt to ſurmount the Difficulties which might ariſe, and vigorouſly endeavour to overturn any Oppoſition that ſhould be brought againſt them. But, I am ſorry to ſay, that in this late unfortunate Expedition, our Leaders ſeem not to have *attempted* a Conqueſt. Let it be granted that the Coaſt was alarmed,

that

that the Militia of the Country, and even ſome regular Forces, were got together to oppoſe us. If our Troops were ever intended to fight, I cannot ſee that an Oppoſition from the *French* ought to have been any Objection to their Landing.

If the Men of War could come near enough to bring their Guns to bear on the Shore, they would certainly be able to cover the Landing of the Men; and to ſuppoſe that the Ships could not come near enough to the Shore, would be the higheſt Affront to the Schemes and Directors of the Expedition, as Nothing could be more ridiculous than to laviſh away near a Million of Money in equipping an immenſe Fleet, to be ſent againſt a Place where it was impoſſible for them to be of any Service.

They could not expect to be oppoſed by a Fleet, as they knew that the Enemy was not able, at that Time, to ſend one out againſt us. True indeed it is, that the Men would have been hazarded by landing them; ſo alſo would the *French* Troops by being attack'd; and if it was abſolutely improper for our Men to be expoſed to Danger, it was certainly in the higheſt Manner ridiculous to ſend them upon any Buſineſs that could not be done without it.

Beſides, the unhappy Situation of our Affairs required a bold Stroke to ſet them to Rights; and what might have been Raſhneſs at another Time, would have been Prudence at this. It is to be feared, that our Enemies, who could before have but an indifferent Opinion either of our Courage or Conduct, will now

now be confirmed in deſpiſing both. They muſt certainly be elated and we depreſt.

Until we act with more Vigor and Skill, or however with more Succeſs, it is not to be expected that they will be prevented from purſuing any of their Schemes againſt us, through Fear of our Menaces, or Dread of our Vengeance. They cannot be under great Apprehenſions of a People, who *boaſt* ſo *much*, and *do* ſo *little*. They muſt now make a Jeſt of us; and where can be the Wonder, when we are become ridiculous even to ourſelves?

However, it is now paſt; the Fleet is returned, inglorious, and our Diſgrace is fixed. The ſtricteſt Enquiry into the Conduct of the leading Officers might produce only Confuſion and Expence. It would not leſſen our Misfortunes.

Exemplary Puniſhments, indeed, in ſuch Caſes, might, one would imagine, ſerve as Marks of Terror to future Commanders, to avoid the ſame Courſe of Behaviour; but even this Method ſeems to have been tried without Succeſs.

Courage was formerly accounted a Characteriſtic of the *Engliſh* Nation, and our Sailors were reckoned bold even to Raſhneſs. I wiſh we are not ſoon remarkable for ſomething of a contrary Nature. Moſt of our Sea-Officers, indeed, would fight even their beſt Friend upon a falſe Point of Honor, and put any Man to Death, to revenge an imaginary Affront in a drunken Quarrel; and yet they ſeem not overfond of Danger, when the public Honor is at Stake,

The

The Truth of the Matter ſeems to be, that the Love of our Country is an old-faſhioned, obſolete Virtue. The World is greatly altered ſince that was in Vogue. Our Affections are now amuſed with ſenſeleſs Whims, and engroſſed by trifling and unmanly Pleaſures; while the Love of our Country is looked upon to be as ridiculous as Knight-Errantry: and the Bulk of our modern Gentlemen would no more take up Arms, merely for the Sake of the Society they were born in, and live Members of, than they would ſally forth, armed *Cap-àpee*, to the Aſſiſtance of unfortunate Princes, or encounter Monſters and kill Giants, for the Service of diſtreſſed Damſels.

A merry Gentleman obſerved, the other Night in Company, that to remedy this Want of a Patriot Spirit among us,

us, ſome other Motive ſhould be found to influence our Courage and raiſe our Ardor in the Day of Battle. The Pay which our Officers and Private Men of the Navy as well as of the Army, receive, ought to be looked upon in that Light, as it makes it their Duty, independently of what they owe their Country, to engage the Enemy with Reſolution.

But as they can receive that Pay without fighting, it is found not to be a ſufficient Motive with them to expoſe themſelves to Danger. My Friend therefore propoſed, that every Gentleman of the Navy ſhould be allowed, and even obliged, when he ſailed againſt the Enemy, to take with him what he moſt valued, whether it was his Money, his Horſe, his Barber, his Taylor, his Dog, or his Miſtreſs. The Fear of his Favorite falling into the Hands of his Foes, might poſſibly, he ſaid, inſpire each

each Man with Courage, and his darling Paſſion might ſupply the Place, and produce the Effects of, a Love for his Country.

You will, I dare ſay Gentlemen, before this (if you condeſcend to read me) think me tedious as well as impertinent. I ſhall therefore treſpaſs very little more on your Time. I have mentioned a few of the principal and moſt ſtriking Faults and Imperfections of the Navy; many others, I doubt not, Gentlemen, there are of an inferior Kind, which fall under your Inſpection. The Navy is the Bulwark of *England*, and was it properly managed, is ſufficent not only to defend us from, but even to make us triumph over, our Enemies. While it is under your Direction, it's Diſcipline, it's Morals and conſequently, it's Succeſs will depend on you. Let your Courage, Conduct and Unanimity join to aſſiſt

and

and preſeve us. We will not then deſpair; our Hearts ſhall not be dejected by the preſent diſpiriting Proſpect, nor ſhall we think that *Britain* has loſt her Power, becauſe ſhe has dropped her Succeſs.

I need not, I dare ſay, Gentlemen, add any more to convince you of the Neceſſity of your exerting yourſelves. The Fate of *England* greatly depends upon you. If we are once more to flouriſh, and be raiſed from the ſinking Condition we at preſent ſeem in, it muſt in a great Meaſure, by your Means come to paſs.

If it ſhould be ſo, conſider, what Thanks, what Praiſes, what Adoration, a grateful People would pay the Man, whoſe Fortune it ſhould be to reſtore them to Power and Happineſs! but

ſhould

ſhould you ſuffer us to ſink without your utmoſt Endeavours for our Protection, reflect what Curſes, what Execrations, what Infamy would be heaped on thoſe, who poſſibly might have been able, but would not earneſtly ſtrive to ſave their unhappy Country.

F I N I S.

E R R A T U M.

Page 33, *Line* 15, *for* Schemes *read* Schemers.